

What are Formation Groups?

Three or four men or three or four women gathering roughly 15 times over an 8 month time period to process and practice God's work in their lives.

What does "Formation" mean?

Formation is a wholistic term that encompasses all of the ways in which we are made, shaped, formed, and influenced. Formation includes our thoughts, desires, and actions.

What is the goal of Formation Groups?

Maturity of the whole person – head (our thoughts), heart (our emotions), and hands (our actions).

How do Formation Groups accomplish this goal?

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How do I know if this Formation Group is successful?

Every person in the group would have a better understanding of who God is and what He has done (orthodoxy – right beliefs), a greater affection for God and emotionally healthy faith (orthopathos – right emotions), and more fruitful habits and rhythms of mission and ethics (orthopraxy – right actions). We hope that being in deeper community with one another will raise your level of interpersonal awareness somewhat on some or all of these five awareness areas – self-awareness, others awareness, awareness of how others perceive or experience you, emotional awareness, and cultural awareness. We also hope that through the exercises, conversations, and intentionality of habits and rhythms that people will see an overall increase in their purposefulness and fruitfulness in mission, vocation, relationships, and rest.

Why is this a need?

There are many aspects of the Christian life that require really small and intimate groups that are known for confidentiality and safety. Many of the things that we need the most help on are uncomfortable or inappropriate to talk about in larger group settings. From our missional survey and our overall sense of our congregation we perceive that we are educated beyond our obedience. We hope that this environment will help participants see their desire of God and their mission with God catch up to their knowledge of God.

How are Formation Groups different from what I might expect?

These groups are not focused on information and content, rather they are focused on helping one another shape healthy rhythms of life as kingdom disciples. In other words, the exercises in here are not meant to further educate, rather to increase our obedience by making us increasingly aware of ourselves and others so that we might be more well-rounded and fruitful kingdom disciples.

When do groups meet?

We suggest that groups meet bi-weekly from September to November, then take from mid-November to mid-January off and resume bi-weekly from mid-January until the end of April. It is up to each group to decide their own rhythm. If you want to meet more frequently or less frequently, you are free to do that. Do whatever is best for the participants in your particular group.

How do we decide when to cancel a meeting?

We suggest meeting every time that at least three people can attend and to cancel when it is two or less. We suggest that groups be precisely comprised of precisely four people, this way when one person cannot make it to the meeting it doesn't kill the meeting.

What boundaries are there in Formation Groups?

- Everything shared in the group is expected to be confidential unless expressly communicated otherwise.
- Gentleness and respect are expected between every participant.
- Active listening is expected by all participants.
- Advice or counsel is only offered when a participant asks for it and we hope that people would ask for counsel regularly.

What does it look like to start or get connected a group? Who should we have in our group?

Follow the discernment guide on page 5 of this resource.

